



MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer  
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
Los Angeles, California 90012

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Dr. Jonathan E. Fielding, Director of Public Health and Health Officer provided the Board with an update on the progress of convening a Business and Health Advisory Task Force on Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) as detailed in the attached report dated May 27, 2003.

Barry Sedlik, representing the World Trade Center Association and Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation, Masahara Kohno, Consulate General of Japan, Zhong Jianhua, Consulate General of China, Curtis C. Jung, representing the Asian Business League of Southern California and Vincent Lee, representing the American Restaurant Management Association addressed the Board.

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Attachment

May 27, 2003



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

**Gloria Molina**  
First District

**Yvonne Brathwaite Burke**  
Second District

**Zev Yaroslavsky**  
Third District

**Don Knabe**  
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**Michael D. Antonovich**  
Fifth District

**THOMAS L. GARTHWAITE, M.D.**  
Director and Chief Medical Officer

**FRED LEAF**  
Chief Operating Officer

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES  
313 N. Figueroa Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012  
(213) 240-8101

May 27, 2003

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Thomas L. Garthwaite, M.D.  
Director and Chief Medical Officer

Jonathan E Fielding, M.D., M.P.H.  
Director of Public Health and Health Officer

SUBJECT: **BUSINESS AND HEALTH ADVISORY TASK FORCE ON SARS**

This is a report on our progress to date in responding to your Board's motion of April 29, 2003 instructing the Director and Chief Medical Officer and the Director of Public Health and Health Officer to convene a Business and Health Advisory Task Force on SARS. Due to the urgency of the issue an initial group was convened following the guidelines defined by your Board and with substantial assistance from the County's Office of Small Business and the others (see attached). An initial meeting of this group was held on Monday, May 19, 2003 with the goal of getting preliminary thoughts and working to expand the membership of the group to form the Task Force.

During this initial meeting, the group recommended that a subcommittee with a specific task should be formed. We were informed by various members of the group representing the Asian-Pacific Islander business community, service organizations and media that a significant segment of the Asian-Pacific Islander community relies on news directly from their countries of origin by satellite TV and radio broadcasts and even print media, and are therefore not aware of the limited number of cases of SARS that have been identified here in Los Angeles County. That has led to a substantial fear of leaving the perceived safety of their homes to pursue their usual business, marketing or entertainment activities. This has had a severe impact on business activity in the community, and surprisingly, even some hospitals are reporting a substantial decrease in emergency room activity and inpatient census.

The group recommended that we approach the editorial leadership of the Asian-Pacific Islander Press and Media and attempt to convince them to feature the positive aspects of the current limited invasion of SARS in Los Angeles County and the United States. The subcommittee when formed will have the task of advising us on the best means of contacting the appropriate leadership in the media and on how best to structure the messages we want to convey.

In the meantime we will continue to expand the Task Force membership based on input from Board offices and concerned stakeholders. Once the fully formed subcommittee has completed its work we will reconvene the entire Task Force to address any other issues. We anticipate the duration of the Task Force not to extend beyond July 31, 2003

Although the Task Force must finalize its work plan, we envision its tasks to include providing advice regarding ways to: (1) maximize the information available to the public regarding SARS to reduce anxiety and fear; (2) work with healthcare providers to assure that information is available in a timely manner; and (3) increase dialogue regarding SARS with the media, business and community groups. The Task Force is being staffed through the Public Health Medical Director's office. We estimate that to date approximately 35 hours of staff time have been dedicated to this project.

Also attached to this report also is the current U.S., State and local data regarding the number of SARS cases that have been identified as of May 23, 2003. Los Angeles County now includes four children less than 10 years of age and three persons over 70 years of age. The average age is 36 with a range of 2 to 78. We have posted SARS information on our web site and have provided links to the federal Centers for Disease Prevention and Control. We have sent letters to each of the 30,000 licensed physicians in Los Angeles County and to every hospital in the County about the need for increased vigilance, appropriate isolation techniques, and the need for immediate reporting of possible cases to DHS. Information is also readily available to county residents on our hotline.

We have been responding to the press on a daily basis. Our medical epidemiologists have also conducted dozens of educational sessions for local hospital staffs and our SPA staff have responded to town hall meetings and other community requests for information and presentations.

We will report to you again when the subcommittee has met and developed a plan for consideration by the Task Force. If you have questions or need additional information, please let either of us know.

TLG/JEF;jh  
tgjfes052703SARSTASK.TLG

#### Attachments

c: Chief Administrative Officer  
County Counsel  
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors



**County of Los Angeles-Department of Health Services  
Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) –Task Force**

**Initial Participants**

**Chair: Dr. James H. Haughton, Medical Director  
DHS Public Health –Medical Administration  
313 N. Figueroa Street, Room 227, Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Telephone Number: 213 250-8685 Facsimile Number: 213 481-9853  
Email Address: [jhaughton@dhs.co.la.ca.us](mailto:jhaughton@dhs.co.la.ca.us)**

NAME	ORGANIZATION	CONTACT INFORMATION
Richard Espinosa	Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors	Email Address: <a href="mailto:Respinosa@bos.co.la.ca.us">Respinosa@bos.co.la.ca.us</a> Telephone Number: 213 974 4444
1. Barbara Baiz	Los Angeles County –Office of Small Business	Email Address: <a href="mailto:Barbara.Baiz@lacdc.org">Barbara.Baiz@lacdc.org</a> Telephone Number: 323 260 2311
2. Edna Bruce	Director, Los Angeles County-Office of Small Business	Email Address: <a href="mailto:Edna.Bruce@lacdc.org">Edna.Bruce@lacdc.org</a> Telephone Number: 323 260 2311
3. Yealanda Charles, RN, PHN (Staff)	Los Angeles County-DHS Public Health/Medical Administration	Email Address: <a href="mailto:ycharles@dhs.co.la.ca.us">ycharles@dhs.co.la.ca.us</a> Telephone Number: 213 240 8005
4. Patrecia M. Prowtle, MA (Recorder)	Los Angeles County-DHS Public Health/Medical Administration	Email Address: <a href="mailto:pprowtle@dhs.co.la.ca.us">pprowtle@dhs.co.la.ca.us</a> Telephone Number: 213 989 7174
5. Geoff Chin	Reporter, Sing Tao Daily Newspaper	Email Address: <a href="mailto:Geoffchin76@singtaousa.com">Geoffchin76@singtaousa.com</a> Telephone Number: 626 282 4505 ext 212
6. David E. Dassey, MD	Los Angeles County-DHS Public Health Deputy Chief, Acute Communicable Disease Control	Email Address: <a href="mailto:ddassey@dhs.co.la.ca.us">ddassey@dhs.co.la.ca.us</a> Telephone Number: 213 240 7941
7. Owen Guenthard	Alhambra Chamber of Commerce	Email Address: <a href="mailto:oguener@yahoo.com">oguener@yahoo.com</a> Telephone Number: 626 282 8481
8. Christine Hsu	Director, Chinatown Service Center	Email Address: <a href="mailto:chs@cscla.org">chs@cscla.org</a> Telephone Number: 212 808 1740
9. Maria Iacobo	Director, Los Angeles County-DHS Communications	Email Address: <a href="mailto:miacobo@dhs.co.la.ca.us">miacobo@dhs.co.la.ca.us</a> Telephone Number: 213 989 7065
10. Catherine Pascual (Staff)	Los Angeles County-DHS Communications	Email Address: <a href="mailto:cpascual@dhs.co.la.ca.us">cpascual@dhs.co.la.ca.us</a> Telephone Number: 213 989 7013
11. Frank Kwan	Los Angeles County-Office of Education Director of Communications	Email Address: <a href="mailto:Kwan_frank@lacoe.edu">Kwan_frank@lacoe.edu</a> Telephone Number: 562 922 6360
12. William Leavitt, MD	University of Southern California Director of Student Health	Email Address: <a href="mailto:wleavitt@usc.edu">wleavitt@usc.edu</a> Telephone Number: 213 740 0456



**County of Los Angeles-Department of Health Services  
Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) –Task Force**

**Initial Participants**

13. Anna Long, PhD	Los Angeles County-DHS Public Health Chief of Staff, Health Office	Email Address: <a href="mailto:along@dhs.co.la.ca.us">along@dhs.co.la.ca.us</a> Telephone Number: 213 240 8036
14. Daisy Ma	Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association Advisory Board Member	Email Address: <a href="mailto:Dma1016@yahoo.com">Dma1016@yahoo.com</a> Telephone: 323 890 7248
15. Shobha Naimpally, MD	Los Angeles Unified School District Director, Student Medical Services	Email Address: <a href="mailto:SNAIMPALLYMD@AOL.COM">SNAIMPALLYMD@AOL.COM</a> Telephone Number: 213 763 8342
16. H. Cooke Sunoo	Asian Pacific Islander-Small Business Program Director, Small Business	Email Address: <a href="mailto:CSUNOO@FC.LTCC.org">CSUNOO@FC.LTCC.org</a> Telephone Number: 213 473 1603
17. Melinda Ou	KSCI-TV	Email Address: <a href="mailto:mou@kscitv.com">mou@kscitv.com</a> Telephone Number: 310 442-2353
18. Kenny Yee	Cause/ABL/CCC	Email Address: <a href="mailto:kenny@winghing.com">kenny@winghing.com</a> Telephone Number: 310 261-9989
19. David Kudo	Sushi & Tofu and All Japan News Inc	Email Address: <a href="mailto:kudo@susiandtofu.com">kudo@susiandtofu.com</a> Telephone Number: 213 680-0011
20. Cynthia Dunn	Rafu Shimpo and LA Japanese News	Email Address: <a href="mailto:goldpacmkt@aol.com">goldpacmkt@aol.com</a> Telephone Number: 213 629-2231 X 139
21. Ellen Endo-Dizon	Rafu Shimpo and LA Japanese News	Email Address: <a href="mailto:ellenendo@yahoo.com">ellenendo@yahoo.com</a> Telephone Number: 213 629-2231 X 125
22. Sheri Sakamoto	LA County-Board of Supervisors Don Knabe, Supervisorial District	Email Address: <a href="mailto:Ssakamoto@bos.co.la.ca.us">Ssakamoto@bos.co.la.ca.us</a> Telephone Number: 213 974-4444
23. Jury Candelario	APCON	Email Address: <a href="mailto:Ap3con@pacbell.net">Ap3con@pacbell.net</a> Telephone Number: 213 553-1832

JGH:PP

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Revised doc 5/23/03 6pm PP

	Total Cases	Case Classification	
		Suspect*	Probable**
U.S.A.	355	290	65
California	68	46	22
Los Angeles	14	8	6
<p>*Suspect case: moderate respiratory illness with fever and epidemiologic criteria for exposure.</p> <p>**Probable case: severe respiratory illness with fever and epidemiologic criteria for exposure.</p>			
May 23, 2003			